

# "Girl Never Marry a South American!"

Says Peggy

*She Tried It and Was Glad to Escape Back to the Land of the Free Woman from Her Brazilian Prison House and Husband Sailer*

I was forbidden to converse with people on board, only allowed to walk on one side of the deck, and informed that I was not to take part in any games, parties or dances.

"Why, you're not going, my dear, you're too young, and besides you wouldn't know how to act!"

That was the last straw! Then I made a desperate effort to Brazilianize myself. I ceased talking, ceased working, ceased smiling, and almost breathing. I was suffering the keenest agonies of loneliness. Each day was like a year and still no talk of returning to these glorious United States (they were getting more glorious every day).

It seemed difficult to understand that to make a Brazilian out of an American woman is simply impossible. The Brazilian woman is the exact opposite of her happy northern sister. She has never known the joy of freedom; for generations she has been absolutely subject to the will of her lord-and-master husband and still is. Her sons may and do dictate to her from the age of five or thereabouts. If she happens to be born of an upper middle-class or wealthy family she does not attend any school, but has a tutor who gives lessons at the home. A Brazilian girl's education always includes French, music and painting. They play the piano beautifully and are wonderful artists.

Matches are frequently arranged by the parents, but it is not customary to force a marriage when anyone is unwilling (they are a little ahead of China here). When engaged, couples never go out alone nor are they permitted to be alone. The Brazilian is the ideal lover. He is fairly prostrate at the feet of his lady fair. What an idol she is—until they are married.

Positions are instantaneously shifted. She must obey, she must cater to his every whim. If he is master and loses no time in letting her know it. Of course, if she is Brazilian she expects it and knows nothing else. She is expected to bear children at once and then more children, as large families are quite the thing there, and besides, they would keep her so busy she would have no time nor inclination to annoy her husband or harass him with questions as to his whereabouts of evenings. She is never supposed to do any housework or dish-washing, even in an emergency. If the maids are ill, things simply go undone, and being possessed of about as much "get-up-and-go" as an oyster, a little thing like that doesn't bother her in the least. Tomorrow will do as well as today, and to-morrow must not soil her hands though the heavens fall.

The restraint of the women is in striking contrast to the liberty and license accorded the men. They do exactly as they please, go where they like and account to no one. Truly Brazil is a wonderful country—for the men.

I hardly dared to question about our return or reveal my anxiety, but intimated that I was ready to leave at any time most favorable to his extreme highness. He appeared greatly amused, smiled and calmly informed me that he expected to spend the rest of his life in Brazil and hadn't the slightest intention of returning to the United States, and all with the "What-are-you-going-to-do-about-it?" attitude.

Then like a rainbow in a dark sky came a letter from home, from mother. She was coming for a brief visit. My joy was indescribable! It was an oasis in the desert of despair. "At least," I thought, "he will have to be attentive to me while she is here and after that it doesn't matter."

The finest guestroom in the house was prepared and her reception by the family was all I could wish for.

"She will never know," I said to myself, "her visit must not be spoiled. She will return happy."

Again I was disappointed. Her apparently indifferent attitude seemed only to aggravate his abominable treatment. Why even put himself out to be civil to me since I was in Brazil? Why worry over property in safe deposit vaults?

The tender eyes of a mother saw very quickly through my thin veil of outward complacency. For a while she pretended to ignore, then even joked over the absurdity of a new husband's "neglecting" his bride and made a thousand excuses for him. His behavior, however, had ceased to be amiable.

"Meccas!" he said one evening, approaching her in most ingratiating fashion, "allow me to present you with a nice little for the night. You see it is zee nicest and finest steamer on the line and I have purchased you a most comfortable stateroom."

We could see American candor was no match for Brazilian cunning. Ma says to herself, says she, "I didn't raise my child to be a fool mat." However, as the steamer was to steam the following morning, it was no time for solicitude.

Following morning, 8:30. Much noise and confusion. "Where was Meccas?"

"Where was mother?" How should I know? Oh, yes, she had mentioned that she wanted to do a little shopping before taking the steamer but had entirely forgotten to get a well-donchikous.

"Vell!" French for "passage ticket!" 9:30 a. m.—"Lord of creation" leaves for office. I, d. bearing.

9:31 a. m.—Injured dignity! "I, d. bearing. (That's my knock on door and whisper. "Are you ready? Put on all you can wear on your back because that's all you'll carry this trip."

9:32 a. m.—Yours Truly emerges from room under four suits of clothes, seven pairs stockings etc. Tooth brush, comb and powder puff surreptitiously concealed upon person.

9:33 a. m.—Escaping refugees knock boldly on boudoir door of very sweet little person to bid good-by. Some sweet lady becomes unduly excited until told that, "Of course, we shall go to Signor —'s office and his lordship will accompany mother to the steamer. Thusly."

9:34 a. m.—Hearing two victorious "Americano" ladies speed down the avenue. Taxi stops. Signor —'s office? Nope, wrong aken. Mysterious ladies alight at the harbor's edge and hailing a deaf and blind boatman engage passage on his leaky raft. In consideration of the sum of one hundred and sixty-five mil reis he will condescend to steer escaping refugees out to the British liner lying afar in the calm waters of the bay of Rio. Once on board our haven bound for the U. S. A., well, "My Country 'tis of Thee!"



PEGGY FORAN.

## A True Story From Real Life—Her Own Real Life—By Peggy Foran.

YES, making a living is the greatest of all sports. Dependence on one's own resources sharpens the wits and is the greatest educator known. Travel is another and pleasanter form. Marrying a foreigner is the least desirable but most effective of all. To any misguided young lady contemplating such a "faux pas" this little story is affectionately dedicated.

How did I happen to do it? For the simple reason that at the time I knew about as much about foreign countries and foreigners as I do about the planets. Unfortunately this same ignorance is shared by the great majority of American girls of today.

This is how it came about: "He" had come to the United States some years before with a younger brother who was to complete his education at a Pennsylvania university. One day he happened to see my photo on the cover of a magazine in the office of a friend of his in Philadelphia. It took him just two weeks to come west, look up some acquaintances and effect the introduction. The Brazilians' national motto may be, "Manana," but women are their long suit.

As introductions were first made over the telephone, I was curious to see and talk to the man who had come so far with no incentive but a photograph. The family name, which was recognized with a mingled sense of surprise and pride, served instantly to disabuse mother's mind of any further doubt as to my future career; in fact, she had us married and settled down that very afternoon. We awaited his arrival expectantly. He was due at the house about tea time and was punctual to the minute. At the first sight of him I exclaimed, "Well, it's all off, mother."

"Do be courteous at least," she whispered hastily as the door was opened to admit our guest. After a thoroughly boring afternoon, his suggestion of a theater party in the evening listened coldly. So I decided to give him the "once over" and see the show. To make matters worse the play was brimful of love. That night I didn't insinuate or intimate; I told him he was wasting time in Chicago. Still he persisted in asking to see me. After talking things over with my sister next day I discovered that my most substantial objection, after all, was lack of any sentiment on my part. She had married for love and drew the most impossible blank; here was food for thought.

I did think: I found myself vaguely considering this very unattractive man as a possibility. I thought all day and the longer I thought the more he grew on my imagination. The next day he came earlier than ever. I could see he was serious and bet that no designing sirens would steal him away from me. I decided to listen to mother; the infallibility of her judgment was part of my creed; so, when sagely advised to consider him seriously, I stood not upon the order of consideration. From experiences of others not distant related to me I could see there was nothing in the watchful waiting policy of long engagements. We were married the following Monday. I had hypnotized myself into believing that I loved him. By perfectly logical reasoning I looked forward to a future of lasting joy through perfect understanding, having decided to live entirely for him and his happiness, which was henceforth to mean mine. It takes two to make a quarrel, so I figured there wouldn't be any in our house. Sounds like a perpetual honeymoon right away, doesn't it? When I "reckoned" on that, there was a rude awakening in store for me.

We were to have a three-months' honeymoon trip in South America and Europe and return to the states to live "anywhere I chose." The few weeks we spent in the east before sailing were the brief paradise of my life. My new husband was the king of lovers. I had

everything I could wish for and a great many superfluities I had never particularly longed for, including my personal maid and a lovely woolly-white Pomeranian. He showered me with presents and attention and far outdid my fondest dreams of model husbands.

A brother-in-law then appeared upon the scene. He was the callow college youth. A jovial smile, a pair of skinny ankles encased in gray spats, a gold tipped stick and the inevitable cigarette. He met with my entire approval. Was he not the brother of my own beloved? And besides, his smile was irresistible.

Three passages are booked for Rio de Janeiro. His! The plot now thickens—enter Mr. Hyde!

From the moment the Statue of Liberty faded in the distance a change came over the spirit of his dreams. Presto! The indulgent husband became the tyrannical lord of creation. I was forbidden to converse with people on board, only allowed to walk on one side of the deck and informed that I was not to take part in any games, parties or dances.



At the front gate I encountered an old colored porter who seemed greatly distressed at seeing me walk out alone.

As he spent most of his time in the smoking-room or swimming pool I ventured to ask what, in his opinion, would be the proper method of deporting myself in his majesty's absence. I received the curt reply, "You should study French," so that I can present you to my mother."

So after dinner when everyone collected in the music-room or strolled about on deck, I sought a secluded spot according to orders and applied myself to French grammar. I, of all persons, to move and breathe only according to rules set by my supreme lord and master.

"Killjoy" was inadequately descriptive. Once during the voyage I was permitted the privilege of a dance; not because he wanted to see me enjoy myself, but rather to offset his reputation as a grouch.

I had heard a great deal about his wonderful country and the anticipation



I dusted the bedroom and spread the bed before the chambermaid's arrival. This was an appalling shock to the entire family and I was well scolded for my pains.

of seeing it buoyed me up during the three weeks' voyage. Certainly it is a marvel of scenic beauty. On the eighteenth day we entered the far-famed bay of Rio de Janeiro.

I was rather disappointed at not seeing mother-in-law on board, and decided to be surprised when I saw her on shore. Dressed to the last word of Parisian fashion, youthful and smiling, she was indeed a sweet picture, yet she certainly resembled her son! As we whirled along the bay on the magnificent Avenida Beira Mar, it seemed like a glimpse of fairyland. Lecturers call it the most beautiful boulevard in the world. Certainly it is second to none I have seen except perhaps the famous Champs-Elysee of Paris. Riverside drive does not compare with it.

My reception was most cordial. At the house everything was done to insure my comfort and make me feel at home.

I got along fairly well the first week, though I was practically alone except at meal time, when conversation was in Portuguese, which, of course, I could not understand. Occasionally French or English was spoken for my benefit. I saw practically nothing at all of Mr.

during the week. On the evenings we were favored with his presence at dinner, he would enter the "salon," where we would be seated awaiting the call to the table, go directly to his mother, kiss her affectionately, and leave the room without as much as "good evening" to his bride. After dinner it was his custom to go out. I knew not where, nor was I supposed to ask. Why, it was none of my business where my husband spent his evenings! At 8:30 p. m. I would distinctly hear him dismiss the chauffeur and drive out alone, the big gate clanging behind him with a hollow, sickening sound. The hour for returning was a movable feast, so I soon tired of sitting up waiting. I stood it about as long as could reasonably be expected and one night, "happened upon him" just as the dimmers were being adjusted with an "All-dressed-up-and-no-place-to-go" look.

He demanded indignantly to know why I was dressed to go out and where I thought I was going, to which I replied that I was going with him and planted myself beside him on the front seat.

My dear, your place is in here" (indicating the tonneau and opening the



After putting on my wraps I was told to remove them, that I was not to go to church. "People only go to church to flirt."

door). Mechanically I obeyed and sat in silence in the back of the car. I wondered where we were going and peered out from the curtained windows at the gorgeous spectacle of the Bay of Rio by moonlight, the most wonderful sight I ever expect to see.

Suddenly we turned around and spun straight back to the house where he stopped abruptly and told me to "go inside." The ride was over. I was just half way up the stairs when I discovered that instead of returning the car to the garage he had turned around and was speeding down the avenue.

I was thankful when Sunday came around it only in anticipation of the wonderful privilege of going to church. After putting on my wraps in the morning I was told to remove them, that I

was not to go to church. "People only go to church to flirt."

Here it was almost 4 o'clock and the house like a morgue. In desperation I made up my mind to take a little stroll before tea-time. At the front gate I encountered an old colored porter, who seemed greatly distressed at seeing me walking out alone. He began gestulating and spluttering something in Portuguese, waving me back into the house. By this time the whole household was alarmed; bells were ringing and black faces of servants peered out of every doorway. Madame my mother-in-law was up looking very worried. She was relieved and delighted to see me, but "who told me I could go out?"

So I was the cause of all this excitement merely because I wanted to take a walk. "Imagine," that "terrible" little "Americano" attempting to take a walk—all alone—"Horrible, scandalous!"

After a week or so of "walking in the garden" I became very bold indeed and simply announced that I was going "out." Dear little mamma-in-law, in a last vain effort to keep peace in the family at any price, rose to the occasion, and provided me with a twelve-year-old "escort." That evening I was obliged to give an account of our every move to a frightfully enraged husband, who said I had no business to take a walk at any time. I should be home taking care of the children! When I asked in amazement, "What children? Whose children?" I heard more about the frivolity of American women. For days I was just sick at heart. Being obliged to remain indoors I spent my time at the piano, doing fancy work (which abhors), or some other inside occupation. Once, for want of something better to do, I dusted the bedroom and spread the bed before the chambermaid's arrival. This was an appalling shock to the entire family, and I was well scolded for my pains. It was final proof of my plebeian origin.

"At last," I said to myself, when five invitations to President Fonseca's ball at the national palace were received at the house. If I had waited a long time, it would be worth it. Picture what a "time of my life" I'd have with all the petrified fogies of Brazilian society. I'd tell them just what I thought of their stupid antiquated ideas, too, when they asked me. Next to being presented at court it was about the best I could think of!

"How perfectly grand," I exclaimed in delight, "I'll wear my new blue satin."